

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair stations such as WBFF (Baltimore) and WRLH (Richmond), use the public airwaves free of charge, and are obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

It is bad enough that these stations are getting their "news" programming from Fox, which is run by a former Republican campaign manager who has long since forgotten any obligation to report real news. Now that Sinclair has gone one worse and insisted that these stations - which are already providing in-kind advertisements for George Bush during the news day, must further broadcast the full-length Republican diatribe called "Stolen Honor" - how much of this must my tax dollars and the tax dollars of other law-abiding American citizens go for? If George Soros were to buy the American Media tomorrow, would you stand by and allow free Kerry publicity, 24-7? Please remember that you must enforce the law now because the shoe may one day be on the other foot. You don't want to set that precedent. Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.